

ENERGY CODE CHANGE PROPOSED BY DOE

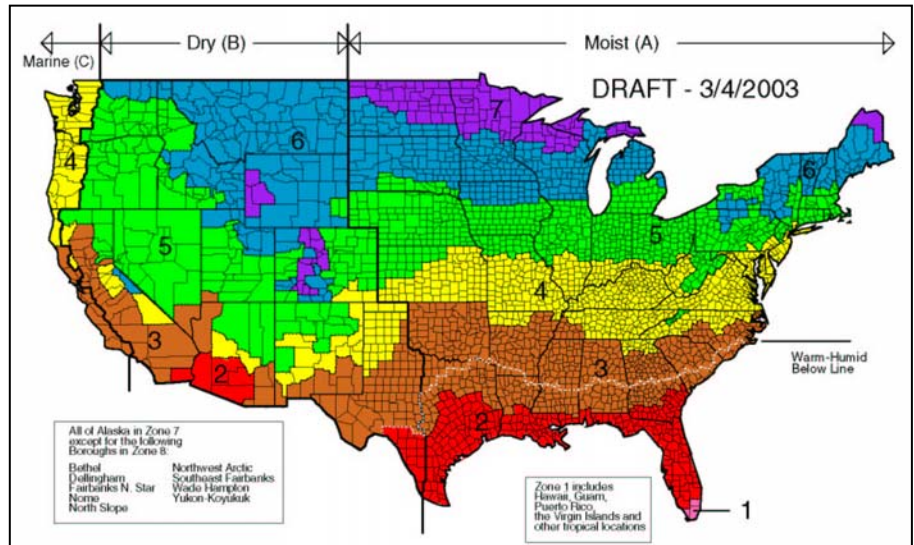
Thursday, June 26, 2003 – 1:30 p.m.

The Department of Energy's Proposed Change to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC and the International Residential Code (IRC)

To promote energy-efficient and environmentally sound design and construction of the Nation's buildings, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) works with national code organizations like the International Code Council (ICC) to develop improved national model energy codes.

DOE is proposing several changes to the ICC's *International Energy Conservation Code (IECC)* and *International Residential Code (IRC)*. The IECC, the successor to the *Model Energy Code*, sets energy efficiency requirements for residential buildings.

Each new edition of the IECC and IRC goes through the ICC Code Development cycle. Any interested party may submit a code change proposal during the cycle and participate in the proceedings to promote the proposed code change(s). DOE plans to submit its proposed residential code change for consideration in both the IECC and IRC in the 2003-2004 Code Development Cycle.



Why is DOE proposing this code change?

Over the last two years, DOE has gathered feedback from builders, code officials, energy efficiency advocates, and other interested parties to understand their issues with the current codes. One common issue is that the codes are unnecessarily complex and thus difficult to use.

How would DOE's proposal change the IECC/IRC?

DOE's proposed code change is intended to

- **Make the code easier to use** – envelope component area calculations would no longer be needed, making determination of code compliance easier.
- **Make the code more uniform for all residential buildings** – every residential building in a climate zone would have the same requirements.
- **Reduce the number of climate zones** – there would be fewer climate zones in any state and fewer climate zones overall. This means that there is less chance for jurisdictions to fall into multiple climate zones.
- **Make the climate boundaries more logical** – all climate zones would be based on state or county boundaries.
- **Maintain the flexibility of the current codes** – trade-offs would still be allowed and use of existing above-code programs such as Home Energy Rating Systems would be encouraged.
- **Accommodate and encourage voluntary programs that exceed the code** – residential buildings meeting the requirements of voluntary programs that are approved by building officials as being more energy efficient than the code could be approved as complying with the code without additional paperwork.
- **Maintain the same overall stringency as the current codes** – the purpose of this code change proposal is to make the code more usable, not to change its stringency. Average stringency across all residential buildings, in all climates, would be about the same as the current code.

What happens next?

The final proposal will be submitted to the ICC mid-March 2003. The proposal will be debated in an open hearing, and the IECC and IRC code development committees will vote on the proposal in September 2003.

How can I get more information?

A current draft version of the proposal is posted on the DOE website. Changes to the proposed code have been made based on the feedback DOE has received on previous versions.

For more information or to review the proposal, visit the DOE website at www.energycodes.gov